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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 003175

SIPDIS

FOR NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/28/2015

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SUBJECT: GOE TRACKING SYRIAN MOVES IN LEBANON; NOTES OUR DEMARCHE ON MAINTAINING PRESSURE.

REF: STATE 78006 (NOTAL)

Classified by ECPO Counselor John Desrocher for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) The Charge delivered reftel demarche to Presidential Spokesman Soliman Awad April 28. Before hearing the demarche, Awad noted that the just-concluded visit of Russian President Putin had been very successful. Turning to Lebanon, the Charge drew from reftel talking points to stress the importance of maintaining pressure on Syria to fully implement UNSCR 1559. Awad took careful note of the points, noted President Mubarak's interest in this matter, and said that he would deliver our points directly to the President.

2. (C) Poloff followed up with MFA Cabinet staff member Amr Sherbiny. Sherbiny, who will accompany the Minister later April 28 to Istanbul for an Iraq Neighbors meeting, said that Egypt was watching developments in Lebanon and Syria closely. Citing public comments by the State Department Spokesman, Sherbiny said that he had anticipated the U.S. demarche and understood that pressure on Damascus and the Lebanese regime would continue until UNSCR 1559 was fully implemented. Sherbiny promised to pass our demarche directly to the Foreign Minister.

3. (C) Reviewing the status of events in Lebanon, Sherbiny believed elections would be held on time starting May 29, based on the "law of 2000 with minor amendments." On Syrian troop withdrawal, Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister Walid Al Muallim reportedly told assembled Arab Ambassadors April 27 that all Syrian forces ("kuwwat") had departed Lebanon and that a "full withdrawal" had been completed. Sherbiny said that Muallim reportedly said that Syria was "thinking about establishing diplomatic relations with Lebanon," as UN Special Envoy Larsen had urged during his latest regional tour. Responding to poloff's assertion that militias in Lebanon would need to be disarmed, Sherbiny stated that this difficult task would take time and would need to be addressed by the Lebanese themselves after elections.

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